

## DRAFT Nevada Social Studies Standards

### Geography Glossary

**Atmosphere:** the envelope of gases, aerosols, and other materials that surrounds Earth and is held close by gravity. The gases predominantly by nitrogen, oxygen, argon, and carbon dioxide and include much smaller percentages of helium, methane, and hydrogen.

**Biosphere:** the realm of Earth that includes all plant and animal life forms.

**Cardinal directions:** the four main points of the compass: north, east, south, west.

**Compass rose:** device drawn on maps to show the directions.

**Complex map:** see special purpose maps.

**Cultural diffusion:** the spread of cultural elements from one culture to another.

**Culture:** learned behavior of people, which includes their belief systems and languages, their social relationships, their institutions and organizations, and their material goods – food, clothing, buildings, tools, and machines.

**Degradation:** the act of reducing worth or value.

**Demographic:** pertaining to the study of populations statistics, changes, and trends based on various measures of fertility (adding to a population), mortality (subtracting from a population), and migration (redistribution of a population).

**Depletion:** the gradual using-up or destruction of capital assets, especially of natural resources.

**Developed countries:** an area of the world that is technologically advanced, highly urbanized, and wealthy, and has generally evolved through both economic and demographic transitions.

**Developing countries:** a country in the process of becoming industrialized.

**Distribution:** the arrangement of items over a specified area (synonymous with spatial distributions).

**Economics:** the science that deals with the production, distribution, and consumption of wealth.

**Ecosystem (ecological system):** a system formed by the interaction of all living organisms (plants, animals, humans) with each other and with the physical and chemical factors of the environment in which they live.

**Five themes of geography:** location, region, place, movement, and human/environment interaction.

**Fragmentation:** breaking a part away from the whole.

**Geographic Information System (GIS):** a geographic data base that contains information about the distribution of physical and human characteristics of places or areas. In order to test hypotheses, maps of one characteristics or combination can be produced from the database to analyze the data relationships.

**Goods:** merchandise, wares.

**Grid:** a pattern of lines on a chart or map, such as those representing latitude and longitude.

**Human characteristics:** features and patterns of features on Earth's surface created by humans.

**Human features:** features and patterns of features on Earth's surface created by humans, including dwellings, crops, roads, machines, places of worship and other cultural elements; synonymous with human characteristics and cultural landscapes.

**Hydrosphere:** the water realm of Earth, which includes water contained in the oceans, lakes, rivers, ground, glaciers, and water vapor in the atmosphere.

**Interdependence:** people relying on each other in different places or in the same place for ideas, goods, and services.

**Intermediate directions:** the points of the compass that fall between north and east, north and west, south and east, south and west (e.g., NE, NW, SE, SW).

**Land use:** the range of uses of Earth's surface made by humans. Uses are classified as urban, rural agricultural, forests, etc., with more specific sub-classifications useful for specific purposes (for example, low-density residential, light industrial, nursery crops).

**Latitude:** location north or south of the equator measured by imaginary lines (parallels) numbered in degrees north or south.

**Lithosphere:** the uppermost portion of the solid Earth, including the soil, land, and geologic formations.

**Longitude:** location east or west of the prime meridian measured by imaginary lines (meridians) numbered in degrees east or west.

**Map projection:** a mathematical formula by which the lines of a global grid and the shapes of land and water bodies are transferred from a globe to a flat surface (e.g., Goode's Interrupted, Mercator, Robinson, Peter's).

**Migration:** the act or process of people movement from one place to another with the intent of staying at the destination permanently or for a relatively long period of time.

**Multinational organization:** organizations of nations aligned around a common economic or political cause.

**Natural hazard:** an event in the physical environment, such as a hurricane or earthquake, that is destructive to human life and property.

**Nonrenewable resources:** a finite resource that cannot be replaced once it is used (for example, petroleum, minerals).

**Perception:** the feelings, attitudes, and images people have of different places, peoples, and environments. The images people have in their heads of where places are located are called perceptual or mental maps.

**Physical features:** aspect of place or area that derives from the physical environment.

**Physical regions:** an area with one or more common characteristics or features, which give it a measure of homogeneity and make it different from surrounding areas.

**Pivotal:** describes essential component that determines the effect of something.

**Places:** locations having distinctive characteristics which give them meaning and character and distinguish them from other locations.

**Political boundaries:** the limit or extent within which a system exists or functions (e.g., governments of cities, counties, states, countries).

**Region:** an area with one or more common characteristics or features, which give it a measure of homogeneity and make it different from surrounding areas.

**Renewable resource:** a resource that can be regenerated if used carefully (for example, fish, timber).

**Resource:** an aspect of the physical environment that people value and use to meet a need for fuel, food, an industrial product, or something else of value.

**Services:** work done for others as an occupation or business.

**Settlement pattern:** the spatial distribution and arrangement of human habitations, including rural and urban centers.

**Spatial organization:** the mode in which Earth space is structured.

**Spatial patterns:** pattern of space on the Earth's surface.

**Spatial perspective:** the point of view that emphasizes the essential issue of place, embodied in specific questions such as *Where is it? Why is it there?*, as fundamental dimension of human experience.

**Spatial:** pertains to space on Earth's surface; refers to distances, directions, areas and other aspects of space.

**Special purpose/thematic/complex map:** a map representing a specific spatial distribution, theme, or topic (e.g., population density, cattle production, or climates of the world).

**Suburban:** pertains to the culture, manners, and customs of a residential area outlying a city.

**System:** a collection of entities that are linked and interrelated such as hydrologic cycle, cities, and transportation modes.

**Topographic:** detailed map illustrating selected physical and human features of a place.

**Trans-regional alliances:** political and economic alliances between states that transcend traditional cultural regions (e.g., Organization of African unity).

**Unification:** the act of combining into one.

**Urban:** related to a city or densely populated area.